

# Biosecurity for the Birds: Q&A

## Q What is “Biosecurity for the Birds?”

A “Biosecurity for the Birds” means doing everything you can to protect your birds from disease. There are 6 basic steps you can take to protect your flocks and to promote “Biosecurity for the Birds”:

1. Limit traffic on to and off of your property.
2. Keep it clean. Use bleach or other disinfectant on your shoes, clothes, hands, egg trays or flats and truck tires
3. Don’t borrow diseases from other poultry farms by using your neighbor’s equipment, tools or supplies.
4. Don’t haul disease home on your truck or car.
5. Know the signs of infected birds.
6. Report any sick birds to your state or local veterinarian.

## Q Why should I care about Biosecurity?

A The U.S. investment in poultry is in the billions of dollars. Outbreaks of bird diseases such as exotic Newcastle disease (END) or Avian Influenza (AI) can spread and kill flocks quickly. An outbreak can happen anywhere and these diseases can spread to surrounding birds if not immediately reported and contained.

## Q What is END?

A END, or exotic Newcastle disease, is a contagious poultry disease that attacks chickens, turkeys and many other species of birds. An outbreak of END in California in 2003 cost more than \$180 million in lost birds. Pet and poultry owners not only lost birds, but in some cases their livelihoods.

## Q What is AI or Bird Flu?

A AI is “Avian Influenza” or bird flu is a highly contagious viral disease that can infect many types of birds.

## Q Can pet birds get these diseases?

A Virtually all birds, including pet varieties, are susceptible to END.



*You are the best protection your birds have.*

## Q What are the signs a bird is sick?

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1. Sudden increase in bird deaths in your flock.
  2. Sneezing, gasping for air, coughing.
  3. Watery and green diarrhea.
  4. Lack of energy and poor appetite.
  5. Drop in egg production or thin-shelled eggs.
  6. Swelling around the eyes and neck and head.
  7. Purple discoloration of the wattles, combs and legs (AI).
  8. Tremors, drooping wings circling or lack of movement (END).

## Q Who should you call?

A Don't wait. If your birds are sick or dying, call your local cooperative extension office, local veterinarian, the state veterinarian or U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Veterinary Services office to find out why. USDA operates a toll-free hotline **(1-866-536-7593)** with veterinarians to help you. There is no charge for this service.

## Q Should I report a sick bird even if I am not sure it is END or AI?

A YES. Let the experts make the determination. We would rather people be cautious than let one of these highly contagious diseases go unreported.

## Q How can I get more information on Biosecurity for the Birds?

A You can find out more information by visiting the USDA website [www.aphis.usda.gov/vs](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs).

## Q About APHIS

A APHIS stands for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the United States Department of Agriculture.



United States Department of Agriculture  
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

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